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EXTENT of PAUPERISM in the DISTRESSED UNIONS in LANCASHIRE
and other parts of the NORTH of ENGLAND, 1861-62. By
FREDERICK PURDY, *Principal of the Statistical Department,*
Poor Law Board.

SINCE the manifestation of Distress in Lancashire, and in some other Manufacturing districts, which has been ascribed to the outbreak of civil war in North America, and to the great diminution in the shipments of raw cotton to Europe which followed that event, the Poor Law Board has laid before Parliament, monthly returns of the number of paupers receiving relief in those Unions which have, up to the present time, most severely suffered by the suspension of their ordinary manufacturing pursuits. The "Cotton Famine" being, according to popular belief, the predominant cause of the distress.

The data for the table at page 382 and 383, have been abstracted from the Official returns alluded to; and represent the total number of Paupers, both in-door and out-door, in receipt of relief on the last day of the last week in each month, from November, 1861, to July, 1862, inclusive; lunatic paupers, in asylums, and vagrants, however, are excluded from the statement; those two classes constitute but a small portion of the total pauperism. On the 1st January, 1861, in the Union-County of Lancaster, for example, the asylum lunatics numbered 1,461; and the vagrants 204; together 1,665.

The Unions ranged in the statement under Cheshire and Lancashire, contain the great Cotton manufacturing district of England; there are considerable variations in the proportion of their respective inhabitants who are engaged in the cotton trade; and considerable varieties, also, in the character of the manufactured product. To these causes, the unequal pressure, borne by some parts of the district, is attributable. Thus, in the unions of Oldham and of Preston, both having the same amount of population, and, according to the census of 1851, about the same number of adults employed in manufactures; it will be observed that at the latest date, the pauperism in Oldham was 1 in 27; and in Preston 1 in 9, of the population. The pauperism of Preston was *threefold* that of Oldham. In the populous union of Chorlton it was less, by *one-half* per cent., than that of Oldham; but, in 1851, Chorlton employed only 16·7 per

Note.—Mr. Purdy has been good enough to prepare this Paper at my request, at short notice, with a view of placing before the Fellows the latest and most complete abstract of the official returns of the distress arising out of the Cotton Famine.—ED. S. J.

cent. of the adult population in manufactures ; while the ratio in the Oldham Union was 39·8.

The ratio of persons employed in the various branches of industry, according to the Census of 1861, cannot be stated at present ; because, the labours of the Commissioners, charged with the collection and publication of those important statistics, are not yet completed. The industrial statistics of 1851 are printed, in respect of every union in England and Wales, in tables (B) and (C) of the series of returns issued by the Poor Law Board, under the title of " Poor Rates and Pauperism."

Statements have been recently made, both in and out of Parliament, as to the number of persons who, in this country, are dependant upon the Cotton manufacture. Some of those accounts differ so widely from what we actually know of the number of operatives engaged in this industry, that their authors appear to be misinformed ; or to have omitted from their statements some important qualifications. In May, 1861, according to a return* prepared at the Home Office, under the supervision of one of the Factory Inspectors, there were in Cheshire and Lancashire 356,487 persons employed *in every description of Cotton factory*, viz. :—

Males (children and adults)	152,553
Females	„	205,934

These numbers were taken at a time when the greatest activity prevailed in the cotton trade.

Most of the wives of the operatives and all their children, legally capable of work, find employment in the mills ; and will be included in the numbers set out above. Of the Males employed, 101,015 were returned as over 18 years of age. If we assume that these were all heads of families, and multiply that number by 4·8, which is the proportion of persons to each family in England, we find that there were 484,872 persons directly dependant for their subsistence on the cotton factory wages of the district. In round numbers they may be stated as *half a million*.†

The numbers thrown out of employment by the injury done to collateral and subsidiary trades, through the stoppage of the cotton-mills, it is not possible to estimate with any degree of certainty.

On inspecting the numbers for July, it is noticeable that there were five Unions, in the cotton manufacturing districts, much more

* House of Commons, No. 23, " Factories," session 1862.

† Mr. Potter has stated in a letter published in the " Times " of the 4th July, that *four millions* depend upon the Cotton manufacture " for the very necessities " of life."

deeply pauperised than the others. In the next statement these five places are ranged according to their relative burdens; and, the steps exhibited, with which they approached their present condition. This is shown by setting out month by month, *the rate per cent. of increase* in pauperism, when compared with that which prevailed at the corresponding periods of the *previous year*:—

Five most Pauperised Unions.—Percentages of Increase of Pauperism in each Month over same Month in previous Year.

Unions, &c.	1861.		1862.						
	November.	December.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Preston	72	109	191	252	245	243	273	281	304
Blackburn	70	93	115	210	279	268	291	324	338
Manchester	45	64	79	93	107	108	115	129	189
Ashton-under-Lyne ..	27	40	137	153	178	265	385	448	582
Stockport.....	55	59	144	204	197	226	272	306	400

Note.—Thus in July, 1862, the pauperism at Preston was 304 *per cent.* higher than in July, 1861.

It would appear from proposals made in Lancashire, and in other parts of the kingdom, that a fear was entertained that our great manufacturing county would be unable to afford the necessary relief to the poor, who, deprived of their usual means of subsistence, must seek the aid of public charity, or of private benevolence. Fortunately, the district upon which the main cost will be incident, is one where the development of wealth has been immense.

Taking the annual value of Real property, assessed under Schedule A, for the purposes of the property tax, as the best exponent of the rateable value, it will be found that in seventeen years, Lancashire has increased 53 *per cent.* in this item of her wealth.

The figures under the principal heads are shown in the following table; they have been extracted from two returns, presented to Parliament by the Commissioners for Inland Revenue.

Annual Value of Real Property in the County of Lancaster, Assessed to the Property Tax in the Years ended at April, 1843 and 1860.

Years.	Lands (including Tithes).	Messuages.	Quarries.	Mines.	Iron Works.
	£	£	£	£	£
1843.....	1,676,145	4,777,536	21,038	348,007	1,174
'60.....	1,605,790	7,019,978	34,667	633,420	5,068

Years.	Canals.	Railways.	Other Property.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
1843.....	71,590	593,515	9,507	7,498,512
'60.....	197,499	1,564,366	393,063	11,453,851
Increase in 17 years	—	—	—	3,955,339

The highest poor rate known up to the present time, in any place in Lancashire, is that of the Preston Union. It is estimated by the Chairman of the Union, that the whole expenditure in relief, for the current year, will amount to 50,000*l.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound on the assessable property, throughout the Union.*

It has been computed, upon the assumption that the highest weekly expenditure hitherto attained throughout Lancashire, will represent the average for the year, that the expenditure for relief to the poor in the parochial year 1862-3, will be 630,000*l.*,† for the whole of the Union-County.

A well informed public writer has maintained, as a probable view in reference to the present distress, that "The manufacturers and merchants of Lancashire are deriving a balance of profit from the war in the United States, and the check to the importation of the raw material. At no single point has any scarcity of stocks yet been shown, the total on hand at most marts being still such as to check a full response to the upward movement of prices here. The amount of over-trading carried on during the years immediately preceding 1861, must therefore have been beyond all former experience even in the wild speculations of this country, and it is palpable that the events which are now causing distress among the Manchester operatives, have converted that which would have brought ruin upon a large number of employers and shippers into a trade which

* See Report in the "Times," of the 7th August.

† The details are given in the "Manchester Guardian," for the 5th August.

“has yielded, as far as they are concerned, highly remunerative returns. Of course all such estimates are idle; but there are persons who believe that the pecuniary difference to Lancashire has amounted to between 20,000,000*l.* and 40,000,000*l.* sterling. Whatever the amount, it must have been enormous, and there is consequently every reason to hope that the wealth of the district will be found able to continue to make the sacrifices that have already been commenced, and that may be essential during the winter. It is believed, moreover, that the pressure of these sacrifices will induce an increased readiness to meet the outlay for new machinery for the more general use, not only of Indian cotton, but of the various fibres that may be adopted as substitutes. It is asserted in some quarters that much reluctance to run any risk even in this respect has been manifested, but when it is found that it is only by such means that employment can be created so as to lessen the relief rates, an impulse will be imparted to the exercise of ingenuity and the embarking of capital, which may have a most important and salutary bearing on the industrial skill of the country.”*

It may be remarked as regards the other Unions, that the distress in Coventry and Nottingham arose upon the French Reciprocity Treaty coming into operation; and, that the pauperism in both unions has considerably declined from the highest point recently attained; though, it is still much above its average level. Stoke-upon-Trent, Birmingham, Ecclesall, Bierlow, Leeds, and Sheffield, suffered by the stoppage of their export trade to America; but, the table satisfactorily shows, that, with the approach of summer, the pauperism in all those unions greatly diminished; and, that in respect to Leeds, it is now so low, as to indicate a very active demand for labour in the great centre of the woollen trade.

* “Times” City article, 9th August.

*Statement of the Number of Persons (exclusive of Lunatics in Asylums and Vagrants),
of each of the Nine Months,*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unions, &c.	Population in 1861.	Number of Persons				
		1861.		1862.		
		November.	December.	January.	February.	March.
CHESHIRE.		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Macclesfield.....	61,517	2,602	2,871	3,045	3,148	2,696
Stockport	94,361	2,123	2,308	3,721	4,494	4,573
LANCASHIRE.						
Ashton-under-Lyne	134,761	2,220	2,486	4,293	4,639	5,158
Barton-upon-Irwell	39,050	853	924	936	950	917
Blackburn	119,937	4,519	5,278	7,233	9,274	10,060
Bolton	130,270	3,750	3,895	4,169	4,251	4,282
Burnley	75,588	1,632	1,694	1,998	2,516	2,638
Bury	101,142	2,151	2,542	3,204	3,693	3,549
Chorley	41,679	1,530	1,748	1,952	2,039	1,900
Chorlton	169,573	2,892	3,144	3,528	3,813	3,884
Clitheroe	20,476	765	779	870	947	867
Haslingden	69,782	1,070	1,423	1,656	1,987	1,673
Liverpool, <i>parish</i>	269,733	15,684	15,864	18,024	42,618*	28,217
Manchester, <i>township</i>	185,040	7,757	9,494	11,356	11,904	12,773
Oldham	111,267	2,109	2,167	2,652	2,942	2,922
Preston	110,488	5,641	7,021	9,859	11,574	11,507
Prestwich.....	20,476	674	731	812	816	801
Rochdale	91,758	2,373	2,572	3,667	4,135	4,239
Salford	105,334	3,150	3,731	4,307	4,334	4,411
Warrington	43,788	1,435	1,583	1,704	1,709	1,734
Wigan	94,559	2,765	2,843	2,945	3,052	2,969
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.						
Nottingham	75,753	5,382	5,609	6,206	6,154	6,075
STAFFORDSHIRE.						
Stoke-upon-Trent, <i>parish</i>	71,292	2,491	2,610	2,915	2,843	2,830
WARWICKSHIRE.						
Birmingham, <i>parish</i>	212,510	12,771	13,284	13,311	11,627	10,654
Coventry	41,647	4,049	4,285	4,556	4,715	4,425
YORK, W. R.						
Ecclesall Bierlow	63,618	2,955	3,241	3,330	2,916	2,788
Leeds, <i>township</i>	117,553	3,246	3,434	3,559	3,528	3,413
Sheffield	128,929	8,153	8,935	9,645	8,494	7,726
Totals	2,801,881	106,742	116,496	135,453	165,112*	149,681

* The excessive number of this week was entirely due to the increase occasioned at Liverpool

Note.—The figures above are abstracted from a paper of the past session, viz., House of

in receipt of Relief in the Distressed Unions of the North of England, in the last Week ended with July, 1862.

8				9				10				11				12				13				14			
Receiving Relief.																Increase per Cent. in Paupers in July, 1862, as compared with July, 1861.				Ratio per Cent. of Paupers to Population, last Week of July.				Unions, &c.			
1862.																											
April.				May.				June.				July.															
No.				No.				No.				No.				Per cent.				Per cent.				CHESHIRE.			
2,837				2,984				2,972				2,959				28				4·81				Macclesfield			
5,081				5,406				6,038				7,241				400				7·67				Stockport			
6,758				8,434				9,632				11,964				582				8·88				LANCASHIRE.			
912				918				963				1,137				48				2·91				Ashton-under-Lyne			
9,998				10,685				11,543				12,028				338				10·03				Barton-upon-Irwell			
4,235				4,449				4,491				4,446				41				3·41				Blackburn			
3,354				3,317				3,398				3,570				170				4·72				Bolton			
3,708				3,734				3,866				4,400				126				4·35				Burnley			
2,003				2,190				2,402				2,369				84				5·68				Bury			
3,893				4,279				4,509				5,417				96				3·19				Chorley			
1,020				1,030				1,025				1,000				70				4·88				Chorlton			
1,657				1,663				1,769				2,354				176				3·37				Clitheroe			
18,214				16,734				15,572				15,351				16				5·69				Haslingden			
12,296				12,795				14,255				16,817				189				9·09				Liverpool, <i>parish</i>			
3,042				2,969				3,065				4,180				150				3·76				Manchester, <i>township</i>			
10,895				11,826				12,145				12,525				304				11·34				Oldham			
780				830				876				948				55				4·63				Preston			
4,477				4,371				4,396				5,129				156				5·59				Prestwich			
4,506				4,455				4,640				5,221				109				4·96				Rochdale			
1,670				1,642				1,642				1,686				39				3·85				Salford			
3,172				3,619				3,626				3,777				43				3·99				Warrington			
5,736				5,099				4,785				4,512				22†				5·96				Wigan			
2,637				2,576				2,505				2,513				6				3·52				NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.			
10,068				9,971				9,543				9,314				10				4·38				Nottingham			
3,053				1,799				1,270				1,416				56†				3·40				STAFFORDSHIRE.			
2,586				2,286				2,168				2,101				29†				3·33				Stoke-upon-Trent, <i>psh.</i>			
3,414				3,264				3,143				3,070				1				2·61				WARWICKSHIRE.			
7,387				6,750				6,411				6,400				21†				4·96				Birmingham, <i>parish</i>			
139,389				140,075				142,650				153,845				75				5·49				Coventry			
																								YORK, W. R.			
																								Ecclesall Bierlow			
																								Leeds, <i>township</i>			
																								Sheffield			
																								Totals			

by the prevalence of easterly winds, which stopped the principal business of the port.

† Decrease.

Commons, No. 502. The last column of ratios, however, was computed for this table.